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Security Council

Seventy-third year

Provisional

8356th meeting
Tuesday, 18 September 2018, 3 p.m.
New York

President:	Mr. Cohen	(United States of America)
Members:	Bolivia (Plurinational State of)	Mr. Inchauste Jordán
	China	Mr. Wu Haitao
	Côte d'Ivoire	Mr. Ipo
	Equatorial Guinea	Mr. Ndong Mba
	Ethiopia	Mr. Amde
	France	Mrs. Gueguen
	Kazakhstan	Mr. Tumysh
	Kuwait	Mr. Almunayekh
	Netherlands	Mr. Van Oosterom
	Peru	Mr. Tenya
	Poland	Ms. Wronecka
	Russian Federation	Mr. Polyanskiy
	Sweden	Mr. Orrenius Skau
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Mr. Allen

Agenda

Reports of the Secretary-General on the Sudan and South Sudan

Report of the Secretary-General on South Sudan (covering the period from 4 June to 1 September 2018) (S/2018/831)

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The meeting was called to order at 3.05 p.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

Reports of the Secretary-General on the Sudan and South Sudan

Report of the Secretary-General on South Sudan (covering the period from 4 June to 1 September 2018) (S/2018/831)

The President: In accordance with rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite the representative of South Sudan to participate in this meeting.

In accordance with rule 39 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite the following briefers to participate in this meeting: Mr. Jean-Pierre Lacroix, Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations; Mr. Nicholas Haysom, Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for the Sudan and South Sudan; His Excellency Mr. Ismail Wais, Intergovernmental Authority on Development Special Envoy for South Sudan; and Ms. Grace John, Governance and Peace Manager for Community Empowerment for Progress Organization.

Mr. Wais and Ms. John are joining today's meeting via video tele-conference from Addis Ababa and Kampala, respectively.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda.

I wish to draw the attention of Council members to document S/2018/831, which contains the report of the Secretary-General on South Sudan, covering the period from 4 June to 1 September 2018.

I now give the floor to Mr. Lacroix.

Mr. Lacroix: I thank you, Mr. President, for this opportunity to brief the Security Council on the situation in South Sudan and the ongoing peace process since the publication of the Secretary-General's 90-day progress report (S/2018/831), on 11 September.

As the Council is aware, there have been several developments, most important the signing, on 12 September, of a revitalized Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict in the Republic of South Sudan. The revitalized peace Agreement is the result of recent intensive engagement by leaders of the immediate region, supported by the international community, to bring about an inclusive and comprehensive resolution to the crisis in the country.

I commend the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD), supported by the African Union (AU) and its international partners, for its sustained efforts to restore peace in South Sudan. The unity of purpose demonstrated by that collective group is indeed what contributed to that progress, including by impressing upon the parties that a military solution will not deliver sustainable peace. While Special Representative Haysom and Special Envoy Wais will provide a detailed assessment of the revitalized Agreement, let me just say that its signing is an important milestone in a crisis that is now entering its fifth year.

Much like the 2015 Agreement, the revitalized Agreement, by and large, provides a road map for peace through reform, political transformation, security, social and economic development and national reconciliation. All the ingredients for success are present. However, there are legitimate questions and concerns about the commitment of the parties, and many practical aspects related to the implementation of the Agreement still require clarification. Despite those concerns, the need for peace in South Sudan is so urgent that we must seize this opportunity and work together to make the Agreement a basis for lasting peace.

Moving forward, the onus of ensuring the implementation of the Agreement will, of course, be on the parties. It will be crucial for the parties, notably the Government of South Sudan and the Sudan People's Liberation Movement/Army in Opposition, to build trust and muster the political will to work together to ensure a more protective environment that will allow all South Sudanese stakeholders, including women, to meaningfully engage in the full implementation of the Agreement. A full and immediate cessation of hostilities is an imperative first step.

In that regard, it is of great concern that, within days of the signing of the Agreement, there have been reports of fighting in Central Equatoria and Unity states. In particular, on 16 September in Central Equatoria, heavy clashes are said to have taken place in Jamula Centre and Mbudu in Kopera county. Hostilities were also reported in Kendiri and Mangalatore in Kajo-Kaji, on 13 September. Reports indicate that those hostilities

are in response to alleged Government attempts to install local authorities in opposition-controlled areas. Both sides appear to have mobilized reinforcements to support those operations to secure territory.

On 15 September, small-scale clashes were also reported around Nying, in Guit county in Unity state, between Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA) in Opposition forces and Taban Deng Gai-aligned forces. Those incidents are reportedly associated with a push by Taban Deng to consolidate influence in his stronghold of Guit county. We remain concerned about the potential for further clashes where Government and opposition forces are in close proximity, particularly in parts of Central and Western Equatoria, Unity and Western Bahr el-Ghazal. In advance of the integration of Taban Deng's forces into the SPLA, we also understand that there is a scramble to assemble fighters, including children, while we have yet to confirm any disengagement of forces, in accordance with the timelines of the revised Agreement.

The continued fighting has worsened the already dire humanitarian and human rights situation in the country. Five years on, approximately 1.8 million persons are displaced within South Sudan, another 2.5 million are living in neighbouring countries. Extreme violence, including conflict-related sexual violence, threats and harassment experienced by civilians continues to be a key hallmark of the conflict. We must therefore send a strong message to the parties that, with the conclusion of the revitalized political Agreement, there is no justification for the continuation of violence, which continues to exact a heavy toll on the civilian population. We must once more call upon them to demonstrate leadership by taking the necessary steps to silence the guns, disengage forces, facilitate the free and unhindered movement of the United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS) and humanitarian partners and reverse the massive humanitarian and human toll of the conflict.

With regard to taking measures to address the human rights and protection situation in the country, I wish to note the recent finding of a military court that 10 soldiers were guilty of committing violence against civilians at the Terrain Hotel in Juba, in July 2016. That verdict is a first step towards delivering justice to the victims of this war and curbing the culture of impunity.

Let me end by reiterating that the signing of the revitalized Agreement offers an opportunity for South Sudan to turn a new page. Recognizing that the road ahead will be difficult, I cannot emphasize enough the critical role that IGAD must continue to play at this critical juncture in the search for peace in South Sudan. IGAD must continue to bring its influence to bear on the parties to the conflict to meet their obligations under the Agreement, including by ensuring that those responsible for violating the Agreement are promptly identified and held to account.

For our part, the United Nations stands ready to assist South Sudan to achieve the goals of the Agreement. UNMISS will continue to perform the tasks required by its current mandate, with the required emphasis on the protection of civilians, which remains a priority for the Mission. The Regional Protection Force, an integral part of UNMISS, will also continue to play its role, according to its existing mandate. Should the Security Council deem it necessary and appropriate to amend the terms of the UNMISS mandate, we stand ready to support accordingly.

Several considerations of principle and practicality, however, must continue to guide these deliberations, including: first, the need for the protection of civilians to remain a key priority within the broader framework of the four pillars of the UNMISS mandate; secondly, the requirement to preserve a single, unified force, including a unified command and control structure, to ensure the continued effectiveness of the peacekeeping operation; and, finally, while UNMISS can contribute to a secure environment conducive to progress in implementing the Agreement, any further role in support of the envisioned security arrangements must be consistent with the principles of United Nations peacekeeping, as well as the standards to which we hold all troop- and police-contributing countries. At the same time, we must ensure that any further tasks are subject to the clear and detailed agreement of the parties to the conflict, as well as the United Nations. That will ensure that each task can be effectively carried out.

Finally, we look forward to working with the Council, IGAD, the AU Peace and Security Council, the parties and all stakeholders to support the Agreement.

The President: I thank Mr. Lacroix for his briefing.

I now give the floor to Mr. Haysom.

Mr. Haysom: I thank you, Mr. President, for this opportunity to brief the Security Council on the revitalized Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict

in the Republic of South Sudan, which was signed by a broad spectrum of political parties on 12 September in Addis Ababa.

When I took up my present assignment, two years ago, South Sudan was attempting to implement the Agreement. As I prepare to leave, in two weeks' time, South Sudan is preparing to implement a revitalized version of that same Agreement, but only after an intervening two years of civil war and devastating conflict. The important question that faces us is how the international community and, notably, the United Nations should assess, support or otherwise respond to this important development.

At the outset, we need to acknowledge the achievement of the Republic of Sudan, supported by Uganda, in mediating the Agreement. Through the Agreement the gap has narrowed among the parties on a number of governance and security issues that had previously seemed unbridgeable. Their combined leverage, the presence of a hitherto absent protagonist — Mr. Riek Machar — and energetic diplomacy resulted in a signed agreement that contemplates a pre-transition period of eight months and a comprehensive transitional road map of three years. There are nonetheless a number of gaps, issues whose finalization remains unfinished and other reasons to assert that the process will need the continuing attention of the region and the international community.

Before dealing with those, let me emphasize that in our approach we recognize that we should not make the perfect the enemy of the good. We recognize that, even where the Agreement can be considered flawed, it could still be an effective platform for peace if the parties demonstrate the political will to implement it, deal collaboratively with the need to face down its challenges and avoid the impulse to seek political, tribal or regional advantage. In that regard, I have advised the parties that the support of the international community for the Agreement will follow an assessment of its sustainability, and not simply the signatures to the text. That now raises the question as to what sustainability might mean with regard to the newly finalized text. Fundamentally, our concerns relate to the following six issues.

First, notwithstanding the efforts of the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) facilitation team, we note that there are still a few, but potentially significant, parties that continue to express reservations about the text. In addition, there are some substantive governance issues that the text contemplates will be resolved in due course. One such issue relates to the number of sub-national states. That issue concerns the very geography of the tribal authority and control. The other issue concerns the way in which the South Sudanese will make their national constitution — their new, embracing social contract. Those issues are indeed central, but not insurmountable if approached in a spirit of inclusivity. That goes beyond a number count of parties signing the Agreement, with a real effort needed to ensure that no group or significant community is left behind.

We have also alerted the parties of the need to address the enforceability of the Agreement. We have already noted the numerous cessation-of-hostility agreements that have been violated within hours of the parties recommitting to peace. No agreement can last in the face of continuing violations for which there is no penalty or consequence. That risks a response by the South Sudanese as to what is different in this Agreement from the previous failed agreements. In our view, the Ceasefire and Transitional Security Arrangements Monitoring Mechanism for investigating, monitoring and reporting violations is not the problem. It is what happens to those reports that constitutes 80 per cent of the system of accountability. If nothing happens to the reports, the system simply does not work. In that regard, we believe that the region must demonstrate a commitment to make the Agreement effective, including by confronting spoilers, even if those spoilers include the Government of South Sudan.

With regard to the parties' responsibilities, we have pointed out that the first step is to demonstrate their political intent by making the guns fall silent — immediately and everywhere. Without such a sign, the international community will be reluctant to provide financial support.

That brings me to the third requirement for sustainability, namely, financial resources, not least to provide for the immediate cantonment of the various forces. From my engagement with significant potential donors, they have shown no or little appetite to fund the process unless there is a clear provision to ensure transparency and propriety in financial transactions, including accountability for past misappropriation of public funds.

The very low levels of trust among the parties constitute one of the hurdles facing the implementation of the Agreement. The prevalent spirit of rivalry will be imported into the Government by virtue of the fact that the parties and their leaders will likely be competing candidates at the elections, which will be the culmination of the transition. The Council should urge the parties to undertake confidence-building measures to build faith in the peace process and ameliorate the bitterness and hostility, which is the legacy of the past four years of horrible intercommunal violence. Such measures do not require financial resources.

Finally, detailed security arrangements and a mutual meeting of the minds on such arrangements are critical. In that regard, the parties may have a different understanding on how the unification of forces will take place. With regard to cantonment sites, there is no agreement on where such sites will be, how many will be established, who will be eligible or who will be responsible for sustaining them. That is despite the fact that today marks D-day plus six; cantonment is contemplated to be completed by D-day plus 30. In addition, there is no treatment, as of yet, of the security gap or who will fill it when the men under arms are cantoned.

Until the very last moment there was little or no mention of the United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS), the fate of its mandate or changes to it in the documents produced during the negotiations. Over the past few days, a proposal to have the Sudan and Uganda fill that gap transformed into a proposal for Uganda, the Sudan, Djibouti and Somalia to be incorporated into the UNMISS Regional Protection Force. What arises from that is the need, referred to in the latest IGAD summit communiqué and underscored by Under-Secretary-General Lacroix, for IGAD to engage with the Council. Only the Council can determine the size and composition of United Nation peacekeeping forces. Such engagement would allow the Council to engage on the security architecture, including the provision of specialist, very important person protection personnel, as well as the geography of disengagement and separation, which would provide a more conducive environment for a peacekeeping intervention.

Those issues do not prevent the revitalized Agreement from being welcomed as a real step forward. They can be resolved if the parties share and show a real commitment to bring peace to South Sudan. On that, the jury is still out. What is clear is that the international community, and the United Nations in particular, will need to keep South Sudan and the implementation of its latest peace Agreement under close watch.

The President: I thank Mr. Haysom for his briefing.

I now give the floor to Mr. Wais.

Mr. Wais: I very much welcome the opportunity to address the Security Council today on the successful recent conclusion of the High-level Revitalization Forum on the Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict in the Republic of South Sudan.

Almost one and a half years ago, the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) Assembly of Heads of State and Government mandated the High-level Revitalization Forum of the South Sudanese parties and stakeholders to discuss concrete measures for achieving a permanent ceasefire and the full and inclusive implementation of the Agreement, as well as to develop a revised and realistic timeline and implementation schedule towards democratic elections at the end of the transition period. The Assembly further mandated the IGAD Council of Ministers to convene and facilitate that process and instructed the Chairperson of the Joint Monitoring and Evaluation Commission, the IGAD secretariat and my Office to support the Council of Ministers. I am happy to inform the Council today that IGAD member States, together with the support of Council members and the international community, have successfully completed that noble process, with all the South Sudanese parties and stakeholders signing the revitalized Agreement.

I would like to take this opportunity to very briefly highlight our achievements and outcomes to the Council. I will highlight some key progress made following the decision of the IGAD Assembly at its thirty-second extraordinary session, held in Addis Ababa on 12 June, during which the Assembly, inter alia, mandated His Excellency President Omer Hassan Al-Bashir to facilitate the second round of face-to-face discussions between President Salva Kiir and Mr. Riek Machar to discuss and resolve the outstanding issues on governance and security arrangements, including measures proposed in the revised bridging proposal of the IGAD Council of Ministers.

In accordance with the decision of the Assembly, the Khartoum round of talks was launched on 25 June as a continuation of the two phases of the High-level Revitalization Forum and the face-to-face talks held in

Addis Ababa. The Khartoum talks followed the signing of the Agreement on Cessation of Hostilities, Protection of Civilians and Humanitarian Access, on 21 December 2017, and the initialling of several agreed governance and security issues here in Addis Ababa. The Khartoum talks, including a round of face-to-face meetings held in Entebbe, Uganda, quickly produced results, including an agreement between the two principals, namely, President Kiir and former Vice-President Machar, to work together to end the conflict.

Prior to the current revitalized Agreement, the South Sudanese parties and stakeholders concluded the following agreements: first, the Khartoum declaration of agreement among the parties of the conflict of South Sudan, signed on 27 June; secondly, the agreement on the outstanding transitional security arrangements, signed on 6 July; thirdly, the agreement on outstanding governance issues for the transitional period, signed on 25 July; and, lastly, the agreement on outstanding issues of governance, signed on 5 August.

I am pleased to inform the Council that most contentious issues were amicably resolved, and the parties signed the revitalized Agreement on 12 September. The signing ceremony was witnessed by IGAD Heads of State and Government. The signing of the July text of the revitalized Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict in the Republic of South Sudan is a milestone and marks the end of formal negotiations at the High-level Revitalization Forum. However, the task ahead of implementing the Agreement requires us all to join hands and mobilize the requisite resources — both political and financial — to make peace sustainable and rejuvenate the rebuilding of the new South Sudan. The signing of the revitalized Agreement was followed by the development of a comprehensive implementation matrix, initialled on 2 September. A permanent transitional security arrangement workshop was convened from 3 to 5 September, the outcome of which the parties initialled.

The High-level Revitalization Forum was all-inclusive process that enabled all parties to the Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict in the Republic of South Sudan, including estranged groups and other South Sudanese stakeholders, faith-based groups, South Sudanese refugees, civil society organizations and women and youth, to participate.

Allow me now briefly to update the Council on some of the IGAD Assembly decisions. The Assembly decided that, until his final status is determined at the upcoming Ordinary Summit of the IGAD Assembly, the leader of the Sudan People's Liberation Movement/Army in Opposition Mr. Machar Teny, shall be allowed to stay in a country of his choice in the region. The Assembly also resolved that IGAD shall engage the Security Council to ensure that the Regional Protection Force (RPF) is fully deployed to execute its mandate in accordance with resolutions 2304 (2016) and 2406 (2018), and shall request a further review of its mandate to allow the Sudan, Uganda, Djibouti and Somalia, as guarantors, to contribute forces to enhance protection and security throughout the implementation of the revitalized Agreement. The Assembly further mandated the IGAD Chiefs of Staff to assess the operational needs and elaborate the necessary tasks of the RPF in the light of the current situation on the ground, and the prospected expansion, as a basis for a securing endorsement from the African Union Peace and Security Council and the Security Council.

As I conclude, allow me to congratulate all the South Sudanese parties on this historic occasion. The determination and resilience has paid off. I thank the Chairperson of the IGAD Council of Ministers, Council members, the high-level facilitators, the Chairperson of the Joint Monitoring and Evaluation Commission and the Ceasefire and Transitional Security Arrangements Monitoring Mechanism and members of the task force for the enormous support to the process, without which we would not have come this far. My special thanks also go to the Government of the Sudan, which hosted the process for the past three months. The Government spared no time, effort or resources to lead the process to success. The role of His Excellency Mr. Eldirdiri Mohamed Ahmed, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Sudan, was outstanding. I wholeheartedly thank the African Union Commission, the United Nations, the European Union, the troika on South Sudan, China, Japan and members of the IGAD Partners Forum for their contribution to the process.

Finally, I want again to express my sincere appreciation and gratitude to you, Mr. President, for this opportunity to brief the Security Council. I look forward to closely working with you in implementing the revitalized Agreement. Security challenges, the dark humanitarian situation in and the rebuilding of South Sudan requires our collective action.

The President: I thank Mr. Wais for his briefing.

I now give the floor to Ms. John.

Ms. John: I would like to thank the United States presidency for this opportunity to speak to the Security Council today on behalf of the Community Empowerment for Progress Organization. I also speak on behalf of the South Sudan Civil Society Forum, a coalition of over 200 groups working to promote peace, freedom and respect for human dignity.

On 12 September, the people of South Sudan welcomed the news that the Government and opposition groups had signed the revitalized Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict in the Republic of South Sudan. After close to five years of war, we desperately cling to the hope that the commitment of the parties is genuine and that they will implement the Agreement in a timely manner.

We know that whatever peace the Agreement brings about will be very fragile. On 14 September, the ceasefire monitoring body announced that it would conduct investigations into an alleged breach of the agreement in the Yei area. On 15 September, the United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS) announced that a peacekeeper had been shot by a Government soldier in the same area. Those are worrying signs. The Security Council must continue to insist on respect for the ceasefire.

Our peace is fragile because some opposition groups declined to sign the Peace Agreement, and others were not party to the negotiations. The Security Council should call for the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) to support continued outreach to, and engagement with, those groups, so that they also join hands to support the Peace Agreement. Even among the parties that did sign, there must be continued efforts to build trust and confidence among them\ and to ensure that they can effectively work together in the same Government, towards a common goal.

This peace is fragile because there is complete impunity within my country. Violations of human rights and humanitarian law rarely result in criminal prosecution. We believe that there must be some effective and reliable deterrent to prevent rampant rape, extrajudicial killings and obstruction of humanitarian access, which have become all too normal in South Sudan. We urge the Security Council to insist on the immediate establishment of a hybrid court for South Sudan and to support efforts to strengthen the national criminal justice system.

Competition over resources and cattle raiding regularly trigger local violence in South Sudan. The divisions among ethnic communities have grown so deep that it is sometimes difficult for us to coexist with each other. My organization is supporting communities to engage in dialogue and resolve differences without violence. We urge the Security Council to call for increased support to local peace initiatives and for the timely establishment of the commission for truth, reconciliation and healing that is provided for in the Peace Agreement.

The South Sudanese people are concerned about reports that Ugandan and Sudanese forces entered the country over the past month. While Presidents Museveni and Al-Bashir played a role in helping parties reach the revitalized Agreement, we are concerned that the presence of their forces could have negative security implications, since they are not yet under a United Nations mandate. The Council must urge South Sudan's neighbours to respect the Security Council arms embargo and insist that any forces entering under the pretext of the Peace Agreement come only as part of the Security Council-mandated peacekeeping mission.

We urge the Security Council to help ensure that our peace does not fall apart. Peace requires that we South Sudanese be honest with ourselves. We must be free to openly deliberate and debate the governance challenges we face, including corruption and impunity. The Peace Agreement provides specific roles for civil society and women and youth representatives in many of the bodies it sets up. They will join bodies tasked with planning security-sector reforms, monitoring the ceasefire, ensuring reconstruction in conflict-affected areas and providing reparations to those most affected by violence. But, in a context where critical voices are silent, where peace, human rights and political activists — such as Dong Samuel Luak, Aggrey Idri, Peter Biar Ajak, Bashir Ahmed and many others — are disappeared or arbitrarily detained, no one will be free to contribute effectively to those bodies or to speak up when the Agreement is not being implemented. I ask the Council to please continue its calls for respect for the freedom of expression and for the release of those who are arbitrarily detained.

South Sudanese women participated in the negotiation of the revitalized Agreement, and one of their major achievements is the increase of required women's participation in Government from 25 per cent to 35 per cent. That is something to celebrate, but it

is also a call to action: to ensure that it is effectively implemented and that women are able to participate equally in decision-making. The Security Council should call for all parties to uphold their commitment to women's full and meaningful participation in the Peace Agreement. The implementation and monitoring of the South Sudan national action plan on resolution 1325 (2000) can also contribute towards achieving that goal.

We urge the Security Council to pressure the parties to the Agreement to honour the ceasefire and implement it in a timely manner; ensure that humanitarian access and the safety of humanitarian workers remain a top priority; accelerate efforts to ensure transitional justice in South Sudan; call on the Secretary-General and his Special Representative on Sexual Violence in Conflict to formally launch the implementation plan for the signed joint communiqué of October 2014 on the prevention of conflict-related sexual violence; remain committed to the protection of civic space and the freedom of expression; ensure that any involvement by the Sudan and Uganda in South Sudan's internal security is supported by the United Nations; call for UNMISS to prioritize issues related to accountability in all support to the military and security forces, including in reform efforts; and call for support from the international community in facilitating the reconciliation process among the political elites in South Sudan.

Finally, we urge the Security Council to continue engaging with civil society in country-specific briefings, in particular concerning Syria, Burundi, Yemen, Uganda and the Democratic Republic of the Congo, as well as in its future discussions on South Sudan.

The President: I thank Ms. John for her briefing.

I shall now make a statement in my capacity as the representative of the United States of America.

We would like to thank Under-Secretary-General Lacroix for his update on the implementation of the mandate of the United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS), as well as to thank to him and Mr. Wais for the discussion of political dynamics and developments in South Sudan. We are thankful to be able to take advantage of Special Envoy Haysom's knowledge with only a few days left in his assignment, and we thank him for being here. We sincerely appreciate that Ms. Grace John joined us at such a late hour, as her perspective helps us understand the situation on the ground in South Sudan and is critical to our discussion here today.

The United States continues to support the people of South Sudan and their aspirations for freedom, peace and prosperity. We welcome the commitment of the region to come together to address common peace and security priorities for the benefit of its citizens. We want to see that commitment translated into lasting peace for the people of South Sudan.

The United States acknowledges the revitalized Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict in the Republic of South Sudan, but past failures make us concerned about the sustainability of the Agreement — for example, how should we interpret the fact that military offensives have been undertaken in violation of numerous ceasefire agreements, even during recent negotiations? How can we reconcile continued blockages to humanitarian access and the killing of 13 humanitarian workers since January? How can we explain the ongoing detention of political prisoners, including Peter Biar Ajak? There has to be a radical change in the behaviour of South Sudan's leaders and a demonstrated commitment to peace, inclusivity, financial accountability and good governance before we, as the Security Council, should welcome any agreement. Otherwise, we are turning a blind eye to past failures.

The implementation of the latest Agreement must begin with the greatest confidence-building measure of all — an end to fighting. It must be broadly inclusive of ordinary people across South Sudan: civil society, religious communities, ethnic minorities and other groups. The Kiir Government needs to ensure greater and more representative power-sharing. There must be meaningful checks on executive and majority power.

The United States supports the continued engagement of the region to facilitate the implementation of the Agreement and acknowledges the role of the Sudan and Ethiopia in hosting recent negotiations. We urge the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) member States and the African Union (AU) to intensify their involvement in monitoring progress on implementation and to hold the parties to account. Violations of the Agreement should be highlighted, and those responsible need to face consequences.

The United States calls on all nations to implement the United Nations arms embargo that the Security Council adopted just over two months ago. We must continue to demonstrate that we will take action against individuals or entities who threaten the peace, security

or stability of South Sudan, if these agreements are to have any chance of successful implementation.

The United States will also prepare sanctions on additional individuals or entities who engage in corrupt activity. We call on regional leaders and financial institutions to ensure the proceeds from corrupt activity do not flow through their jurisdictions and to freeze assets connected to illicit transactions. There must also be accountability for the crimes of recent years. The establishment and activation of the AU hybrid court for South Sudan is long past due. That is an urgent priority. We call our AU partners to make the court a reality, as called for in the latest Agreement.

The United Nations Mission in South Sudan has played, and will continue to play, a vital role in keeping the peace in South Sudan. In this fragile and uncertain transition to peace, it is important that the UNMISS mandate continue to focus on the protection of civilians, while properly configuring the Mission to address evolving risks and realities on the ground.

The United States notes with deep appreciation and deep concern the dire conflict-induced humanitarian situation in South Sudan. An estimated 7 million people currently require humanitarian assistance, and over 4 million of them are children.

For the third year running, South Sudan remains one of the most dangerous environments — if not the most dangerous environment — for aid workers in the world. We need urgent actions to address the egregious access denials, rent-seeking impediments by the Government and the violence that endangers humanitarians. Refugees and internally displaced persons must not be forced to return if they feel unsafe. The end of fighting must not mean a call for forced repatriation.

Above all, we support the aspirations of the people of South Sudan to lead lives unburdened by fear and to experience peace, pluralism and prosperity. In a recent interview, the Archbishop of South Sudan, Justin Badi Arama, put it best: "peace is not something on paper; peace is something which is deeper". It is now time for the leaders of South Sudan to demonstrate that their commitments on paper can lead to a genuine peace and a prosperous future for the people of South Sudan.

I now resume my functions as President of the Council.

I shall now give the floor to those members of the Council who wish to make statements.

Mr. Amde (Ethiopia): We thank Under-Secretary-General Lacroix and Special Envoy Haysom for their respective briefings. As this is likely to be the last time that Mr. Haysom briefs the Security Council in his current capacity, let me express our appreciation to him for all his dedicated efforts as Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for Sudan and South Sudan. We congratulate him on his appointment as the new Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Somalia and we look forward to continue working with him in his new capacity.

We are pleased to have Special Envoy Ambassador Wais via video tele-conference from Addis Ababa. His briefing on developments regarding the Intergovernmental Authority on Development-led (IGAD) South Sudanese peace process is, as always, exceptionally valuable. We in the region are indeed very grateful to him and his team for their efforts during this difficult peace process. They greatly facilitated the successful completion of the High-level Revitalization Forum.

I also thank Grace John for her remarks, and welcome Ambassador Malwal of South Sudan to the United Nations today.

We are now presented with a historic opportunity to end the cycle of vicious violence in South Sudan and bring about tangible results for the people of South Sudan, who have suffered for far too long. The South Sudanese parties should be commended for demonstrating the necessary flexibility in order to sign the final revitalized Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict in the Republic of South Sudan, done at Addis Ababa in the presence of IGAD Heads of State and Government. Efforts by the countries of the region in helping the parties bridge their differences should also be recognized. They really worked in unison to ensure the successful completion of the IGAD High-level Revitalization Forum.

What makes this final revised Agreement unique is that, unlike its predecessor, all the parties signed it without trying to add any reservations. Furthermore, the peace process was conducted in an all-inclusive and transparent manner. All political organizations, including estranged groups, were fully involved in the consultations and negotiations. Civil society organizations, faith leaders, women's and youth groups and eminent persons all participated actively. We hope

that will provide a firm and realistic foundation for the full implementation of the Agreement.

We are of course aware of the divisions within the ranks of the South Sudan Opposition Alliance over the Peace Agreement. However, most of the member groups of that umbrella organization signed the Peace Agreement. We are optimistic that the holdout groups will decide to embrace the Agreement and continue to play a positive role in ensuring that South Sudan remains on a positive trajectory.

We know very well that a difficult task lies ahead. The full implementation of the revised Peace Agreement must now be our priority, and that demands the concerted efforts of all. We must ensure the full and continued commitment of all parties; they are the first and foremost guarantors of the implementation of the Agreement. Given the actions by some parties in the past, we can understand why members of the Council have concerns about this. However, that cannot be an excuse to ignore the significance of the revised Peace agreement for peace and security — not only in terms of its impact on South Sudan but on the whole region. The parties themselves are aware of those concerns. We believe they will do their utmost to demonstrate their commitment to the full and effective implementation of the revised Peace Agreement.

Throughout the long-drawn-out High-level Revitalization Forum process, the support and assistance of the African Union (AU), the United Nations, IGAD partners and the wider international community were indispensable. It is critically important that that support now be extended during the implementation phase. Maintaining unity of purpose among IGAD, the AU and the United Nations in the search for lasting peace, security and stability in South Sudan is necessary today more than ever.

We believe that the Security Council has a particular role to play in ensuring the implementation of the revised Peace Agreement. The IGAD Summit requested the support of the Council in ensuring the full deployment of the Regional Protection Force and a further review of its mandate so that it will be in a better position to support the implementation of the revised Peace Agreement. We hope the Council will respond positively to that request. We will work closely with the penholder and members of the Council to look for the appropriate way to accommodate the request of the IGAD Summit.

Humanitarian and economic conditions in South Sudan remain dire. Therefore, we must remain concerned about the fragile security situation. The immediate cessation of all hostilities is absolutely necessary to deal with such challenges. Last week, the IGAD Summit called upon the Government and opposition groups to prioritize the implementation of the permanent ceasefire on the cessation of hostilities, the protection of civilians and humanitarian access. The restoration of a permanent ceasefire is essential for unhindered access to the affected population and for the safety of humanitarian personnel and assistance delivery.

The continuous support of the international community is also critical. It has done a great deal, but the 50 per cent funding gap to the humanitarian response plan for South Sudan means that the collective ability of humanitarian actors to meet people's needs is seriously constrained. We would hope that the international community will step up its efforts in providing the much-needed humanitarian assistance to the affected population of South Sudan.

Let me repeat that we now have a real prospect for responding effectively to provide solutions to the problems in South Sudan. Now is the time to act. We cannot afford to lose this opportunity.

Mr. Van Oosterom (Netherlands): First, let me express our thanks to Mr. Lacroix, Mr. Haysom, Mr. Wais and Ms. John for their informative briefings.

I would like to take a moment to thank Nicholas Haysom for his service as Special Envoy for the Sudan and South Sudan and congratulate him on his new position as Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Somalia. We look forward to continuing our close cooperation with him.

Today's briefing on South Sudan comes at a decisive time in the country's history, as its leaders signed a new Peace Agreement last week. As leaders in South Sudan show their willingness for a renewed commitment to peace in South Sudan, it is imperative that the Council remain engaged. We must continue to ensure that the United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS) can support the people of South Sudan in achieving sustainable peace. In that context, I will focus on three issues: the political process, accountability and UNMISS.

First, with regard to the importance of an inclusive and genuine political process, we express appreciation to all of the parties involved in the signing of the Peace Agreement on 12 September. Let me especially thank the Intergovernmental Authority on Development. This is another chance at peace for South Sudan, and we call upon all signatories to ensure that the Agreement is respected and implemented. President Salva Kiir and Riek Machar have a great and grave responsibility. It is imperative that the peace process be inclusive. We must not be naive — reaching an agreement on power-sharing and security will not automatically lead to sustainable peace. Building and sustaining peace in South Sudan will require addressing the root causes of the conflict and the commitment and inclusion of all actors.

Let me also stress the important role that the region plays in ensuring a political process with concrete results. Following unrelenting violence in South Sudan, the Security Council imposed targeted sanctions and an arms embargo in July of this year. Such measures must be implemented and adhered to, especially by the region. We consider the action taken on the ground to be tentative steps in the right direction. For such steps to endure, we must continue the targeted sanctions and arms embargo, as they are crucial for ensuring peace in South Sudan. The steps are indicative of the Council's resolve to end the violence and protect civilians.

Secondly, concerning the need to ensure the accountability of all actors in the conflict, we would like to express our appreciation to the Government of South Sudan for convicting 10 military officials for the murders and rapes committed at the Terrain Hotel in Juba. The Government of South Sudan must build upon that important first step to ensuring accountability. Once again, the Secretary-General's report (S/2018/831) paints a horrifying picture. Sexual violence in South Sudan is brutal, widespread and systematic. It is despicable. We call upon the South Sudanese Government to investigate all crimes. All perpetrators of violence must be brought to justice, in particular those responsible for the despicable acts of sexual violence against women and girls. Impunity must end. Accountability is key for building sustainable peace. We firmly believe that the hybrid court for South Sudan is a key instrument in ensuring accountability for perpetrators. We call upon the Government of South Sudan to sign the memorandum of understanding with the African Union to finally establish that necessary court.

Thirdly, with regard to the role of UNMISS, in order to adequately protect civilians, UNMISS and other United Nations staff and humanitarian workers must have unrestricted access to all parts of South Sudan. Freedom of movement for both UNMISS and the Ceasefire and Transitional Security Arrangements Monitoring Mechanism is absolutely imperative. The maintenance and implementation of the Monitoring Mechanism is crucial, especially following the signing of the new Peace Agreement. The Council must strongly condemn all violations of the status-of-forces agreement and ensure that they are adequately addressed. On that note, we condemn the recent attacks against peacekeepers and humanitarian workers. There have been two incidents, which resulted in either the death or serious injury of peacekeepers. On 26 June, a Bangladeshi Blue Helmet lost his life. On 15 September, three days after the signing of the Peace Agreement, a Nepalese Blue Helmet was injured. Our thoughts are with the families and friends of those peacekeepers. The attacks must end. Furthermore, we are increasingly concerned about rising tensions in protection-of-civilian camps. We encourage the voluntary return of internally displaced persons from protection-of-civilian sites. We believe that UNMISS should develop plans and strategies to ensure that the Mission is able to protect civilians at protection-of-civilian camps. It must do so in close coordination with other humanitarian actors. The protection of civilians is one of the most important tasks in the UNMISS mandate.

In conclusion, we are committed to building sustainable peace in South Sudan. We look forward to continuing to support the South Sudanese people in building a more hopeful future for themselves — one in which they are not plagued by the scourge of war and hunger, but, rather, can live together in peace.

Mrs. Gueguen (France) (*spoke in French*): I join others in thanking our briefers.

The signing of the revitalized Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict in the Republic of South Sudan of 2015 is encouraging, a [illegible] on behalf of France. I also commend the Intergovernmental Authority on Development and [illegible] of the region, as well as its Special [illegible], who contributed to the finalization of the revitalized Agreement. France will continue to support the efforts of all partners. Such efforts must be inclusive in order to find a solution to the crisis and end the violence. We hope that the Agreement will enable us to move

towards lasting peace in South Sudan. It is our hope and that of millions of South Sudanese who long for peace and a better life.

Ms. Grace John, from whom we have just heard, is the face of a fledgling South Sudanese civil society that wishes to start a new chapter. But we know that hopes have already been dashed several times in South Sudan, and we must therefore collectively be vigilant and determined. We must be vigilant, first of all, because it is on the actions taken that we will judge the progress made. The Agreement reached must be effectively implemented on the ground. No one — neither the South Sudanese nor the international community — wants peace on paper alone. We will therefore be vigilant in ensuring compliance with the ceasefire and in protecting civilians, which is at the heart of the mandate of the United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS), as Under-Secretary-General Jean-Pierre Lacroix has just reminded us, and is at the heart of the Security Council's concerns. As Special Envoy Haysom has just pointed out, it will also be necessary to specify the mechanisms for monitoring compliance with the commitments made.

The report of the Secretary-General (S/2018/831) refers to the progress on the ground in recent months. But that progress is still far too modest. Several violent and deadly incidents have occurred. And, as early as Friday, a few hours after the signing of the Peace Agreement, the ceasefire was violated in the Central Equatoria region. The next day, Saturday, 15 September, an UNMISS soldier was wounded by a soldier of the South Sudanese Army in the town of Yei, which is an unacceptable attack for which those responsible will have to face justice. In that context, I would like to express France's solidarity with UNMISS personnel.

France will equally be, and we must all be, extremely vigilant about humanitarian access and the protection of humanitarian workers who go to the aid of populations to the point of risking their lives. France's unwavering commitment on that subject is well known.

The humanitarian challenge is huge. Indeed, on this point, the report of the Secretary-General is edifying: 1.8 million displaced persons, 2.5 million refugees in neighbouring countries, 60 per cent of the population in a situation of severe food insecurity and 2.4 million children unable to go to school. Behind the litany of numbers, an entire generation is being sacrificed. Dangerous intercommunity tensions are also being rekindled by poverty. In addition to this tragic humanitarian situation, there have been serious human rights violations, some of which may constitute crimes against humanity and war crimes. That is a cause of major concern for France. It is high time that the hybrid court be established and made operational.

In addition to the necessary vigilance, we must also demonstrate determination and perseverance. We must collectively respond to humanitarian challenges. We must also stand firm with regard to those who bear responsibility for this situation, which is the meaning of the sanctions adopted by the Council. And we are determined to continue along this path as long as necessary.

The Council can therefore count on France's determination. It is the same determination that leads us to give our full support to the Secretary-General's recommendations to alleviate the suffering of the people, silence the weapons and move forward towards peace.

In conclusion, I would like to warmly thank Special Envoy Haysom for his outstanding work over the past two years and wish him every success in his new responsibilities as the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Somalia.

Ms. Wronecka (Poland): Allow me to begin by thanking Under-Secretary-General Jean-Pierre Lacroix, Special Envoy Nicholas Haysom, Special Envoy Ismail Wais and Ms. Grace John, for their informative and thought-provoking briefings.

Poland welcomes the recent positive developments in the peace process and the signing of the revitalized Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict in South Sudan. We commend the regional efforts that led to the Agreement, in particular the role of the Intergovernmental Authority on Development, Ethiopia and the Sudan. Nevertheless we are cautiously optimistic. We have seen South Sudanese parties sign many agreements only to violate them later. We truly believe this time all signatories will demonstrate real commitment and determination to bring durable peace and stability to South Sudan.

Unfortunately, despite those positive developments, the Agreement seems yet to have an impact on the situation of the people of South Sudan. The security, humanitarian and economic situations remain dire. Targeted attacks on civilians, including women and

children, continue. Serious human rights violations and abuses and violations of humanitarian law persist, and their perpetrators enjoy impunity. Millions of South Sudanese are displaced, and more than half of the population is suffering food insecurity. It all has to come to an end. There is no doubt that the people of South Sudan critically need stability and State institutions that care for citizens and provide basic services. It is high time the political leaders of South Sudan put aside their differences and put the people of South Sudan first.

In that context, I would like to stress the importance of political inclusiveness and ensuring women's and young people's participation in political and peace processes in South Sudan. It is our strong belief that South Sudanese women can play a vital role in peacebuilding and reconciliation efforts, as well as in forging resilience.

I would like to express our appreciation to the United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS) for its tireless efforts in extremely difficult circumstances. We praise the Mission's role in the protection of civilians and in ensuring an environment conducive for humanitarian actors to deliver their assistance. We pay tribute to its members who have paid the highest price during their service in South Sudan.

We condemn in the strongest terms the attacks on UNMISS forces and reiterate that such crimes must not go unpunished. We also remind the Government of South Sudan of all its obligations under the status-of-forces agreement.

Let me conclude by thanking Special Envoy Haysom for his hard work, tireless efforts and commitment to supporting the peace process in South Sudan. We congratulate him on his new appointment as Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Somalia and wish him every success in his new endeavour.

Mr. Tumysh (Kazakhstan): We thank Under-Secretary-General Lacroix, Special Envoy Haysom and Special Envoy Wais for their comprehensive updates on the latest developments in South Sudan. We also commend Grace John, civil society representative, for her valuable insights.

My country welcomes the recent report of the Secretary-General (S/2018/831) and would like concentrate on three key issues, as follows.

First of all, our delegation would like to congratulate the people and the Government of South Sudan for finalizing the revitalized Peace Agreement on 12 September. We highly commend the concerted work of the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD), the African Union and the United Nations, as well as the mediation efforts of Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed of Ethiopia, and of Presidents Omar Al-Bashir of the Sudan and Yoweri Museveni of Uganda, which helped to secure the peace deal. The Agreement has become a great example of the cherished notion of African solutions for African problems.

Secondly, we hope that this historic Agreement, signed after five years of fighting, will lay the foundation for durable peace and stability in the country and finally end the suffering of the South Sudanese people. To achieve that, the Security Council needs to remain united in support of IGAD, the African Union and the parties in South Sudan in implementing the provisions of the Agreement. The international community should make every effort to build trust and confidence among the parties and provide adequate and sustained funding for humanitarian assistance, peacebuilding and economic development. For their part, the South Sudanese parties need to demonstrate genuine political will in order to implement the Agreement, stop the ongoing violence by bringing their forces under control and strictly comply with international humanitarian law. Civil society, especially women and youth groups, also have an important role in assisting with intercommunal reconciliation and confidence-building among local populations.

Thirdly, we strongly condemn the recent attack on the United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS) in Yei and call on the Government to investigate the attack and hold the perpetrators accountable. Accordingly, we support the African Union's Silencing the Guns by 2020 programme, as underlined today by Under-Secretary-General Lacroix and Special Envoy Haysom. We also endorse the recommendation of Special Representative of the Secretary-General Haysom to undertake confidence-building measures. We thank him for his exemplary work and cordially congratulate him on his new appointment. We wish him all the best and look forward to dialogue and trust being restored throughout the Horn of Africa region, which will have been made possible by his noble and tireless efforts.

In conclusion, we would like to thank UNMISS for implementing its mandated tasks under very difficult circumstances, and commend Under-Secretary-General Lacroix, Special Representative of the Secretary-General Shearer and Special Envoys Haysom and Wais, as well as civil society and international, regional and subregional organizations and other stakeholders, for their tireless efforts and commitment to seeking a solution to the crisis in the country.

Mr. Almunayekh (Kuwait) (*spoke in Arabic*): At the outset, I thank the Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General to the Sudan and South Sudan, the Special Envoy of the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) and the representative of the Organization for Community Empowerment for Progress in South Sudan for their valuable briefings.

I would like to address four aspects of the topic we are discussing today: the political developments, the humanitarian situation, the mandate of the United Nations Mission in the Republic of South Sudan (UNMISS) and the security situation.

First, with regard to the political developments, the Security Council is meeting today after the signing of the revitalized Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict in the Republic of South Sudan, and after tireless efforts by members of the Intergovernmental Authority on Development and international partners to revitalize the Agreement for the Resolution of the Conflict in South Sudan. We express our appreciation to the signatories of the Agreement and hope that the non-signatories will join the peace process soon. We also express our appreciation for the constructive participation of the Government of South Sudan in the peace process.

We would also like to welcome the role of the Republic of the Sudan in supporting the negotiations. In that regard, we refer to the resolution of the Council of Ministers of the League of Arab States adopted at its hundred and fiftieth session, at which the significant role of the Sudan was appreciated in hosting and facilitating the peace negotiations in South Sudan.

We would like as well to express our appreciation for the significant role of IGAD members in pursuing and promoting peace. We look forward to the result of the revitalized Agreement in resolving the conflict in South Sudan so as to turn a new page based on reconciliation, justice, reconstruction and development.

Secondly, with regard to the humanitarian situation, the continued displacement of 1.8 million inhabitants of South Sudan and 2.5 million refugees in neighbouring countries is a great source of concern for all of us. In addition, large segments of the population suffer from food insecurity. In that regard, we recall resolution 2417 (2018), on hunger and conflict, whose paragraph 7 urges the protection of infrastructure in order to deliver humanitarian assistance, including nutrition.

Peace will be incomplete without improving the living conditions of the population. We hope that the signing of the Peace Agreement will be an opportunity to prepare areas for the refugees and displaced persons in South Sudan so as to be an integral part of the society. We express our appreciation for the role of Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees in securing the safety of refugees before their return, and we emphasize the need to not target humanitarian workers, while also condemning every impediment to their noble task.

Thirdly, with regard to the Mission's mandate, UNMISS should continue its work without obstructions while respecting the laws and charters that govern its operation. We welcome the military court's verdict against the perpetrators of the Terrain Hotel incident. We look forward to accountability being applied to all criminals. We also recall the attack suffered by the Mission while escorting a humanitarian convoy in Central Equatoria state. We welcome the news of the arrest of the person responsible for that disgraceful act.

We thank the Mission and express our appreciation for its work through the implementation of its mandate in line with resolution 2406 (2018), including simple matters that the Mission has implemented, such as presenting gifts to Al-Sabah Hospital and Juba Teaching Hospital.

Fourthly, with regard to the security situation, we are concerned by the violations of the Ceasefire Agreement and the reciprocal accusations, in particular in Central Equatoria state, despite the progress achieved in the peace process. We would also like to applaud the operation of the Ceasefire and Transition Security Arrangements Monitoring Mechanism and the transparency with which it publishes its reports. We thank His Excellency Mr. Festus Mogae for his effective and active role in chairing the Joint Monitoring and Evaluation Commission. We look forward to continued unity among the Security Council, IGAD

and the international community in order to support and protect the work of the Joint Committee and the Monitoring Mechanism.

Finally, we thank Mr. Nicholas Haysom for his efforts as the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General, and we wish him every success in his new position as Representative of the Secretary-General in Somalia.

Mr. Tenya (Peru) (*spoke in Spanish*): We are grateful for the convening of this meeting and for the important briefings by Mr. Jean-Pierre Lacroix, Mr. Nicholas Haysom, Mr. Ismail Wais and Ms. Grace John.

Peru welcomes the signing of the revitalized Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict in South Sudan. We would like to highlight the good offices deployed for that purpose by the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) and the Governments of the subregion.

However, we must recall the repeated violations of the Ceasefire Agreement and other commitments undertaken by the parties, which clearly have undermined their credibility. South Sudan is the most violent country in terms of providing humanitarian assistance, despite the status-of-forces agreement signed by the Government in connection with the United Nations Mission in the Republic of South Sudan (UNMISS).

We would like to stress the importance of the South Sudanese parties remaining committed to the implementation of the new Peace Agreement. The people of the country and the international community need to see a substantive change in their actions in order to be able to support sustainable peace.

In that regard, we express our regret with regard to the high number of fatalities caused by clashes between communities. The Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights and UNMISS have documented the magnitude of forced displacements, attacks against civilians and the particular vulnerability of women and children. Against that background, we would like to highlight the important initiatives involving traditional leaders that have been promoted by UNMISS in order to promote social cohesion, dialogue and reconciliation, as well as the efforts of UNMISS to protect civilians, especially the most vulnerable.

We underscore the need for the Government of South Sudan to develop capacities to investigate, prosecute and punish serious allegations of violations and abuses of human rights and international humanitarian law, including sexual violence and the recruitment of children for conflict.

The parties' commitment to building sustainable peace must also lead to strengthening the cooperation and national capacities required to meet the urgent needs of the people and to promote the sustainable development of the country, in particular in the areas of health care, nutrition and education. To that end, we believe that the recent visit of Deputy Secretary-General Amina Mohammed and the emphasis placed on the participation of women in the political life of the country are important, as is the need to take specific measures to address sexual and gender-based violence. The withdrawal of armed and security forces who are alleged perpetrators of crimes is one of the recommendations put forward by the Special Representative on Sexual Violence in Conflict, which will be important to consider for the purposes of preventing and punishing conflict-related sexual violence.

We also believe that it is necessary that the Council remain united in its support for the South Sudanese peace process and maintain close coordination with the African Union and IGAD. We hope that the recent Peace Agreement and the winds of change in the Horn of Africa subregion will be the start of a new era for the people of South Sudan.

In conclusion, we would like to make mention of the crucial role and efforts of Mr. Nicholas Haysom as Special Envoy for the Sudan and South Sudan and wish him every success in his new and sensitive post as Special Representative and Head of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Somalia.

Mr. Ipo (Côte d'Ivoire) (*spoke in French*): My delegation thanks Mr. Jean-Pierre Lacroix, Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, for his briefing on the report of the Secretary-General on South Sudan (S/2018/831), which provides an update on developments in South Sudan and on the extent of the challenges to peace and stability faced by the country since the start of the conflict in 2013. We also thank Mr. Nicholas Haysom, Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for the Sudan and South Sudan; Ambassador Ismail Wais, Special Envoy of the Intergovernmental Authority on Development for South Sudan, and Ms. Grace John, Governance and Peace Manager for Community Empowerment for Progress Organization, for their excellent briefings. We congratulate

Mr. Haysom on his outstanding work as Special Envoy for the Sudan and South Sudan and wish him every success in his new post and efforts to achieve peace in Somalia.

My delegation's remarks on the report of the Secretary-General will focus on political and security issues, the humanitarian situation, human rights and the operational environment of the United Nations Mission in Southern Sudan (UNMISS).

On the political front, like those who spoke before, my delegation welcomes the signing, on 12 September, by the parties to the conflict of the revitalized Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict in South Sudan. We commend the tireless mediation efforts of the region's leaders, who made a major contribution to the signing of the Agreement. It is now up to the authorities of South Sudan to commit to its full and inclusive implementation so that the South Sudanese people can enjoy the peace and stability for which they have longed for more than five years.

Côte d'Ivoire encourages the South Sudanese parties to take full advantage of the positive regional dynamic and fully commit to working to restore peace and stability to their country, by refraining from unilateral acts that could disrupt a smooth peace process. To that end, it is essential that the authorities of South Sudan receive technical and financial support from the Intergovernmental Authority on Development, the African Union, the United Nations and other partners. In addition, measures must be taken to restore trust among the parties and create a climate conducive to constructive dialogue, which is a prerequisite for the effective and efficient implementation of the Agreement.

On the security front, my delegation is deeply dismayed about the ongoing intercommunity conflicts and criminal acts in the country. Furthermore, continuing clashes in several parts of the country, in particular in Upper Nile, Bahr el-Ghazal and Equatoria, and their tragic consequences on the population, are also a source of concern. Given the situation, Côte d'Ivoire would like to urge the Government of South Sudan to step up efforts to protect civilians, who, under international law, are its primary responsibility. It also calls on South Sudanese parties to put the best interests of the people first and end the clashes throughout the country so that there is a chance for the Peace Agreement to be effectively implemented and for security arrangements to be operationalized, in accordance with the voluntary commitments made.

Recurring violations of international humanitarian law in South Sudan are widespread; ending them must be an absolute priority. With approximately 1.8 million internally displaced persons, 2.5 million refugees and high food insecurity risks, the humanitarian situation in South Sudan remains one of the most unpredictable in the world. According to the Secretary General's report, approximately 2.4 million children receive no education, which poses a threat not only for the next generation but also to the building of a viable State. In addition, deliberate challenges to humanitarian assistance are on the rise. Despite constant calls from the international community, humanitarian workers continue to work in an environment of extreme violence. Côte d'Ivoire condemns all acts of violence committed against humanitarian personnel and equipment. We call on the leaders of South Sudan to create a security environment conducive to the provision of humanitarian assistance and the safe and dignified return of displaced persons to their homes.

With regard to the human rights situation, my country notes with deep concern the persistence of sexual violence, violence against children and the destruction of property and people's livelihoods. It is therefore imperative to ensure the implementation of the principle of accountability, so that the perpetrators of human rights violations are held accountable for their actions before the competent international courts. In that regard, my country welcomes the conviction of 10 Government soldiers for rape and other crimes against civilians. We call on political and judicial authorities to make greater efforts to establish the rule of law in South Sudan.

With regard to the operational environment, Côte d'Ivoire commends UNMISS on the work it carries out in extremely difficult conditions, marked by an increase in the number of violent acts committed against its personnel. The presence of UNMISS in South Sudan is essential for the protection of South Sudan's people and of humanitarian workers. It is therefore important that the Mission be able to operate in the right environment. My country also calls on the authorities of South Sudan to ensure strict compliance with the status-of-forces agreement and eliminate all obstacles to the implementation of the UNMISS mandate.

In conclusion, the signing of the revitalized Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict in South Sudan heralds an improvement in the situation. The return of stability in the country will require not only the political will of the country's leaders but also the support of all international partners. Côte d'Ivoire therefore calls for concerted efforts to help restore peace and stability in South Sudan.

Mr. Allen (United Kingdom): May I also join others in thanking our briefers — Under-Secretary-General Lacroix; Special Envoy Nicholas Haysom, to whom we bid farewell and look forward to seeing very soon; Special Envoy of the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) for South Sudan Ismail Wais, who I know has been working on this dossier so tirelessly and for so long; and Ms. Grace Jones for the valuable human perspective she offered the Security Council.

The Peace Agreement signed last week gives us all hope, none more so than the 12 million people of South Sudan. We very much welcome the commitment shown by the region on the important issue of peace and security. We have been consistent in the Council in supporting IGAD and its work. Although the Peace Agreement signed is a significant achievement, it is the first step on a long journey. We must continue to strive for progress. The people of South Sudan will continue to suffer if peace is not achieved and sustained.

The conflict has already killed thousands and forced a third of the population to flee their homes — 2.5 million to neighbouring countries. Half of the population is food-insecure. Of the 7 million people in need of humanitarian assistance, more than half are children. Following years of conflict, displacement and economic collapse, those children are less likely to receive an education than any other children in the world. At times, South Sudan's leaders have seemed indifferent to the suffering of their people. It is not the result of a natural disaster or an unavoidable situation, it is man-made, and therefore the solution must also be man-made, starting with political stability. The Peace Agreement must create the conditions for a lasting end to the violence. As I said, the region played a vital role in bringing parties to the conflict together, and I commend the much-needed commitment and energy that they invested, including States around this table. Now is the time to build on that momentum. A peace agreement on its own will not deliver and sustain peace for South Sudan. We need to see the continued engagement by all parties and ensure that words are turned into meaningful and sustainable actions.

Those of us who have been saying those things have picked up some irritation and frustration at those sorts of comments. It has been said that we are not being positive enough, or that we are undermining a peace process. I believe that no one will be more positive than those of us around this table — if the process really means an end to the violence and a determination to put the needs of the people first.

Similarly, those of us around this table have a special responsibility to bring the experience and lessons that we have from other conflicts, other peace processes and indeed from our experience of the South Sudan conflict and peace process, to bear. It does not serve the parties to the Peace Agreement, or the people of South Sudan, if we do not use our experience and our knowledge from other peacebuilding situations. It is therefore vital that we adapt and use those lessons. In countries such as Libya, we have seen how political agreements can unravel and enable a relapse into violence. From our experience in Colombia, we have seen that the ongoing commitment from the parties is the key factor for the successful implementation of peace agreements. We have also seen that implementation needs support from the region and sustained, determined engagement from the Council. We need to draw from all those experiences when we consider the situation in South Sudan, as well as understanding why previous peace processes have not worked in that country, and focus all of our efforts on successful implementation.

We must ensure that the revitalized Agreement does not repeat past mistakes. The continued violence, even following the most recent ceasefire agreement, is extremely concerning. Nineteen violations were reported by the Secretary-General between June and September. The increase in humanitarian access incidents and violence against humanitarian workers are gravely concerning. Thirteen humanitarian workers have been killed in South Sudan this year alone.

In addition to that, we are deeply concerned that United Nations Mission in South Sudan peacekeepers have been repeatedly denied access to key areas to allow them to perform their mandated responsibilities. That is unacceptable, and it must end. The region and the international community must closely monitor violations and ensure that those responsible are held to

account. I very much support Ms. John in calling for the establishment of the hybrid court for South Sudan.

As the international community, we must not stand by and allow individuals to undermine peace. The targeted sanctions we imposed in July are an important tool, and are just as important now that the Agreement has been signed. They can be used to maintain pressure on all the parties to keep the promises that they have made. The arms embargo signalled that the international community will not tolerate attempts to impose military solutions. I urge the region and the wider international community to continue to support those measures.

The United Kingdom remains committed to peace in South Sudan, but in order to be convinced of the parties' commitment, we need to see significant change in the approach by the parties to the conflict. They must silence their guns, allow humanitarian workers to deliver life-saving assistance and release political prisoners. They must show a genuine commitment for the effective and accountable implementation of the Peace Agreement and must demonstrate that they are willing to work for the benefit of all South Sudanese, including through checks on executive majority power and the transparent use of resources.

Today the peace process stands at a crossroads. To overcome the challenges ahead, we need unity across the international community. We urge the region to continue to drive forward constructive progress, especially on security arrangements, in step with the United Nations and the international community. Above all, we urge the leaders of South Sudan to put aside personal interests to work together for a better future for their people.

Mr. Orrenius Skau (Sweden): I would like to thank Under-Secretary-General Jean-Pierre Lacroix, Special Envoy of the Secretary-General Nicholas Haysom and Special Envoy Ismail Wais for their briefings today. Let me also extend a particular word of thanks to Ms. Grace John for her briefing. We heard her loud and clear, including her call to urgently enforce the ceasefire, put an end to impunity and ensure accountability and continue promoting women's meaningful participation. I can assure her that we will do our utmost to follow through on her calls.

I would like to start by commending the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) and the facilitators of the High-level Revitalization Forum process, in particular the Government of the Sudan and Special Envoy Wais. Their tireless efforts over recent months, with the backing of a coherent region, were instrumental for reaching the revitalized Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict in the Republic of South Sudan. I also acknowledge the efforts of the South Sudanese for the progress made and for having demonstrated the necessary flexibility and willingness to compromise. But the Agreement is only a first step. What is now needed is a clear political will of the parties to implement what has been agreed to in an inclusive manner and to engage in genuine peacebuilding and reconciliation activities.

While we welcome reduced levels of fighting in recent weeks, we are also deeply concerned about reports of continued military operations. A complete cessation of hostilities by all parties, the Government and armed groups alike, is urgent and must be unconditional. There must be consequences for violations of the Cessation of Hostilities Agreement, as well as against those who stand in the way of the full implementation of the Peace Agreement.

We encourage the region, supported by the international community, to maintain its active engagement and continue to play a proactive role. The region's involvement in monitoring the implementation of the Agreement and holding the parties to account will now be especially important. It is also vital that the Council continue to support those regional efforts, making sure that we speak with one voice.

The spirit of inclusivity, which was a crucial element of the High-level Revitalization Forum, must now be maintained in the coming implementation phase. The quest for peace will be viable only if it includes all stakeholders. We must continue to assure the effective participation of youth, women and civil society. Gender equality is central to peace and security, and we should support further efforts to increase the political representation of women.

An important aspect as we move forward will advancing accountability and transitional justice mechanisms, including by establishing the envisaged hybrid court for South Sudan without further delay. Impunity for human rights violations and abuses and violations of international humanitarian law, not least are acts of sexual violence targeting women and girls, cannot be accepted. The continued high level of conflict-related sexual violence, as highlighted by the Secretary-Generals report (S/2018/831), is truly

appalling. The continued monitoring and reporting of such crimes will remain important.

We also remain deeply concerned about the humanitarian situation, which results directly and indirectly from the conflict. The rapid, safe and unhindered delivery of humanitarian relief across South Sudan must be ensured. In that context, we again commend the United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS) for its efforts to reach areas critical to addressing protection concerns, as well as its preparedness to now support the parties in taking further steps on the path towards peace. It is worrisome that violations of the status-of-forces agreement continue. The denial of access and restrictions of movement remain unacceptable. UNMISS has to be able to carry out its mandated tasks, including to monitor and investigate the human rights situation and to protect civilians.

The millions of South Sudanese caught up in this brutal and futile war have waited for over four years for an end to the conflict and an opportunity to start rebuilding their lives and country. The Agreement reached last week provides a unique opportunity for peace, reconciliation and recovery. This is not the time for euphemisms, but we cannot afford an attitude of cynicism either. As Mr. Haysom said, we cannot allow the perfect to become the enemy of the good. We must remain focused, and all parties must stay the course and seize this opportunity. The continuous efforts of IGAD and the African Union will need our full support. The current momentum must not be lost.

Mr. Wu Haitao (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): We wish to thank Mr. Lacroix, Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations; Mr. Haysom, Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for the Sudan and South Sudan; and Mr. Wais, Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) Special Envoy to South Sudan, for their respective briefings. We thank them for all the efforts made to promote peace and stability in South Sudan. Mr. Haysom has been appointed to a new post, and China commends him for all the work he has carried out in his current capacity as Special Envoy for the Sudan and South Sudan. We also note the intervention of Ms. Grace John.

South Sudan is an important country in Africa. Maintaining peace and stability in South Sudan has a bearing on the prosperity and development of the region. Thanks to recent joint efforts by the various South Sudanese parties and regional organizations, the peace process in South Sudan has made important progress. Last week at the Extraordinary Summit of the IGAD Assembly of Heads of State and Government, the South Sudanese parties formally signed the revitalized Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict in the Republic of South Sudan and its implementation documents, thereby laying an important foundation for South Sudan to end the conflict and move towards peace. We welcome that development, and we commend the steadfast efforts, mediation and good offices of such regional organizations as IGAD and the African Union, as well as of Ethiopia, the Sudan, Kenya and Uganda. We also applaud the cooperation and flexibility demonstrated by the various parties in South Sudan.

At the same time, it must be recognized that the overall situation in South Sudan remains very fragile. There is a plethora of challenges to achieving enduring peace and sustainable development. The United Nations and the international community need to continue to pay attention and provide the necessary assistance to South Sudan. It is imperative to push the various parties in South Sudan to effectively implement the series of peace agreements signed so far, ensure a comprenensive ceasefire and cessation of violence as soon as possible and restore and increase mutual trust so as to achieve lasting peace. The international community should focus on the following tasks in the next phase.

First, it should continue to fully support the good offices and efforts by regional organizations and countries. The international community should respect South Sudan's leadership in handling its domestic affairs; realize the full potential of regional organizations, such as IGAD, and countres as the main channel for mediation; support South Sudan's national dialogue process; and push the various parties in South Sudan to resolve their differences through peaceful means, such as inclusive dialogue, and to build mutual trust. As the primary institution for the maintenance of international peace and security, the Security Council should send out positive messages and play an important role in promoting the political peace process by working together.

Secondly, the international community should continue to help South Sudan maintain domestic peace and security. For a long time, the United Nations Mission in South Sudan has actively supported the implementation of peace agreements, in that way contributing positively to the maintenance of peace and

stability in South Sudan. China commends the United Nations Mission in South Sudan for its efforts and supports its continued implementation of its mandate in accordance with the Security Council resolutions. We hope the Secretariat and the Mission will continue to enhance communication with the Government of South Sudan, help to build the security capacity of the country and support South Sudan in advancing its political peace process.

Thirdly, the international community should scale up humanitarian assistance and economic support for South Sudan. The protracted conflict has caused large-scale displacement and a high number of refugees, thereby stalling economic and social development in some areas. According to the report of the Secretary-General (S/2018/831), only 50 per cent of the funding for the humanitarian response plan for South Sudan is in place, leaving a huge gap yet to be filled. China calls upon the international community to actively support South Sudan in addressing the humanitarian difficulties and tackling both the symptoms and root causes with an integrated approach and increased investment in agriculture, energy, infrastructure, education and health care, thereby assisting South Sudan in rapidly advancing its State-building process and relaunching its economic and social development.

China has consistently attached great importance to peace and stability in Africa, and has always supported African countries in solving African problems in African ways. China will continue as always to actively support and constructively participate in the peace process in South Sudan and to play a constructive role in achieving lasting peace and sustainable development in South Sudan.

Mr. Inchauste Jordán (Pluinational State of Bolivia) (*spoke in Spanish*): We should like to express our gratitude for the briefings given by the Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, Mr. Jean-Pierre LaCroix, the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for the Sudan and South Sudan, Mr. Nicolas Haysom, and the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) Special Envoy to South Sudan, Ambassador Ismail Wais, whom we acknowledge and thank for his commitment and great work carried out during the negotiation process in South Sudan. We also thank Ms. Grace John for her briefing.

I begin by paying tribute to the fundamental role that IGAD played in establishing dialogue between the parties in South Sudan. It was a long and difficult process with several ups and downs that, thanks to the determination of the countries of the region and the will of the parties, led to the signing of the revitalized Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict in the Republic of South Sudan on 12 September. The Agreement was carefully prepared and represents a significant step forward that contributes to ending the conflict in that country, something that everyone in this Chamber seeks.

While we commend this moment in the political situation, the current situation in South Sudan remains one of the most critical in the world. The difficult humanitarian, economic and security situation still affects most of the South Sudanese population. The Agreement is an encouraging step forward, but it needs genuine commitment and strong political on the part of the South Sudanese leaders for its proper implementation, which can be the most difficult phase in a peace process. The ongoing collaboration of the Transitional Government and the opposition with the countries of the region and the United Nations should be further strengthened at this stage.

In that regard, it is very important that the Security Council maintain unity and work in harmony with the African Union and IGAD, among other things, mainly in restoring trust among the parties. As such, a neutral and constructive position must be maintained. For that, it is imperative to coordinate our actions with those of the region.

We urge the parties to implement expeditiously the second chapter of the Agreement, regarding the permanent ceasefire. We hope that the ongoing ceasefire and transitional security arrangements workshops can bring about short-term results and that progress can be made, among other urgent matters, on planning for the unification of the forces of South Sudan.

In relation to the humanitarian situation, we express concern for the more than 6 million people in need of some kind of humanitarian assistance, which represents more than half of the population. Likewise, the almost 4 million internally displaced persons and refugees in neighbouring countries face a lack of basic services, education and health care, as well as serious food insecurity. Unfortunately, those who suffer most from the consequences of displacement are children and women. We must pay attention to the number of children who do not receive schooling and mobilize

the international community to work with them and reclaim a generation that is growing up in precarious conditions as a result of the conflict.

Similarly, we are concerned about the high number of victims of sexual violence, which mainly affects women and girls. To that is added the fact that South Sudan remains one of the most dangerous places in the world for humanitarian workers. While we welcome the recent ruling of a national military court condemning 10 soldiers for their participation in the murder, rape, sexual harassment and armed robbery of humanitarian workers, we believe that it is necessary to step up efforts to fight impunity with greater rigour and effectiveness.

Both the Government and the opposition must ensure an optimal operating environment for the United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS) and humanitarian workers, in compliance with international law and international humanitarian law. We also commend the efforts of the United Nations Mine Action Service, which, together with UNMISS, works to remove and destroy explosive devices. That work will contribute to the resettlement of displaced persons, the return of displaced persons and refugees and the establishment of favourable conditions for the provision of humanitarian assistance.

In conclusion, we reiterate our gratitude to the countries of the region for the leadership demonstrated, which made significant progress in the political process possible. Likewise, we thank UNMISS for the work it is doing, and Mr. Nicholas Haysom for his important work over the past few years. We wish him the greatest success in his future role as Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Somalia.

Mr. Polyanskiy (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): We thank Under-Secretary-General Jean-Pierre Lacroix and Special Envoy Nicholas Haysom for the detailed information on the situation in South Sudan and the progress in the South Sudanese political settlement. I would like to take this opportunity to thank Mr. Haysom for the work that he has done and congratulate him on his recent appointment. I wish him every success in his work at his new post. We also listened with interest to the briefings by Special Envoy Ismail Wais and Ms. Grace John.

The Russian Federation's consistent position arises from the premise that a sustainable ceasefire and the launch of an inclusive process of national reconciliation are the key to stabilization in South Sudan. We therefore welcome the signing of the revitalized Peace Agreement by the parties to the conflict in South Sudan on 12 September. We hope that the breakthrough nature of the agreements reached in Addis Ababa will not be questioned. We agree that they still require substantial detail, but that does not detract from their significance. It is important that the South Sudanese parties demonstrated their readiness to reach a compromise, as well as their desire to resolve their existing differences by peaceful means.

We pay tribute to the effective coordinated efforts of the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD), which enabled the successful completion of the South Sudanese Peace Agreement revitalization process. We note that regional actors painstakingly spent over a year bringing the positions of the parties together. It was indeed the countries of the region that were able to start the negotiation process from scratch at a time when South Sudan's leaders could not even be seated at the same negotiating table. It was IGAD that forged ahead in its efforts when many of those in this very chamber had lost hope and written off the process of revitalization.

We note the unity demonstrated by the region's leaders in their approach to the South Sudan settlement, and we call on them to maintain that approach in their continued support for the peace process. We also welcome the efforts of the guarantors to facilitate the implementation of the Peace Agreement by providing national contingents from the Sudan, Uganda, Djibouti and Somalia as part of the Regional Protection Force.

We see this process as a practical manifestation of the principle of African solutions to African problems, as well as an opportunity for effective cooperation between the United Nations and the Security Council and regional organizations. We are ready to consider substantive proposals by IGAD regarding the Regional Protection Force. We encourage South Sudanese politicians to show goodwill when implementing the revised Agreement.

Despite clear positive trends, we also note calls for broadening sanctions on South Sudan, including in this Chamber. I would therefore once again like to recall our position on that issue. As before, we think that excessive pressure applied through sanctions might entrench the positions of the South Sudanese parties and may give them the wrong signals. The result might be the reverse of what is desired, with the parties turning

to a military solution rather than a negotiation process. That would certainly make it more difficult to achieve a peace settlement. Finally, in principle, we do not accept a situation where attempts are made to use the sanctions regime of the Security Council as a substitute for serious political and diplomatic work.

Mr. Ndong Mba (Equatorial Guinea) (*spoke in Spanish*): This afternoon's debate on the situation in South Sudan is most timely, especially after the recent developments that have taken place in the political context of this brother country. I therefore thank you, Mr. President, for including this issue on the agenda for this meeting.

As usual, the report (S/2018/831) presented by the Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, Mr. Jean Pierre Lacroix — whom we sincerely thank — has been most comprehensive and illustrative regarding the current situation on the ground.

We thank Mr. Nicholas Haysom, Special Representative for South Sudan and Mr. Ismail Wais, Special Envoy of the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) for South Sudan, as well as Ms. Grace John, Governance and Peace Manager for Community Empowerment, for their very informative briefings.

The Government of Equatorial Guinea would like once again to pay tribute to the hard work and efforts of IGAD, the African Union, the United Nations and the United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS) to bring the parties to the conflict closer to implementing the signed Agreement in the quest for peace and stability in South Sudan.

When it comes to this conflict, my country has always advocated that the parties must respect the ceasefire and return to the negotiating table. Today we can say, with a high degree of optimism and some satisfaction, that that objective has been met. All delegations present should congratulate themselves as, in part, this ceasefire is due to the attention given and the pressure exerted by the Security Council.

Equatorial Guinea has closely followed the high-level diplomacy that has, in recent months, facilitated the evolution of the peace process that began with the signing of an important declaration of a joint agreement. That established a permanent ceasefire and introduced commitments in some of the areas of greatest tension. We cannot help but applaud those steps, which unequivocally constitute a step in the right direction.

However, we are concerned about the latest attacks mentioned in the report presented today, which we note were caused by famine and a lack of employment and schooling. We appeal to the sense of responsibility of all parties to the conflict; we remind them of the historic moment for which they are responsible before people and the international community and we strongly condemn the attacks.

We want to remind all parties involved that, in addition to seeking peace, they have an obligation to meet the humanitarian needs of the population, which is dealing with poverty, food insecurity and a shortage of basic services. The fulfilment of that obligation will be successful only when humanitarian operations are able to take place and when threats and risks to humanitarian organizations and their courageous personnel are eliminated.

The Republic of Equatorial Guinea expresses its great satisfaction at the signing of the final Peace Agreement last week in Addis Ababa by the parties involved in the South Sudan conflict, under the auspices of IGAD, the African Union and countries of the region. We offer our warmest congratulations to all, but especially to the Government of South Sudan, for this definitive Peace Agreement that broadens out a new horizon of hope for the country and its people. We may finally see lasting peace established, which should bring with it the dividends of development in all aspects.

However, that new horizon will become a reality only if all of the parties to the recently signed Agreement comply with and respect all its clauses. The commitment of the parties to the agreement is key, as is the support and due attention of the international community when it comes to the effective materialization of this significant agreement. Through it, it will be possible to effectively achieve the peace so yearned for by the people of South Sudan.

However, we would like to point out that the signing of the Agreement does not complete the work of the United Nations, or that of the regional actors, including IGAD, the African Union and neighbouring countries. The post-conflict period, which is extremely complex and requires special attention, must now be effectively managed. On the basis of what happens on the ground, UNMISS must adjust its activities, focus on

direct support for the effective implementation of the Agreement and ensure a sense of calm in the country.

We hope that, with the signing of the revitalized Agreement, a new phase will also give way to create more opportunities to provide assistance to the local population — from food assistance to the repatriation of displaced persons to their homes of origin. As the reports presented to us have pointed out, the humanitarian situation in South Sudan continues to be of great concern. The problem of famine and the issue of human rights must be addressed urgently so that they receive the priority attention they deserve.

The Government of the Republic of Equatorial Guinea urges the Government of South Sudan to continue with its consistent cooperation with UNMISS, IGAD and the African Union so that together they can achieve their sole objective to achieve the peace and stability that the people of South Sudan deserve. For Equatorial Guinea, the reports on the humanitarian situation and human rights are a matter of concern. We hope that there will be improvement in that regard.

In conclusion, our Government commends the recent news of moving displaced persons from the United Nations protection sites to new locations within the community, as well as the conviction by a South Sudanese military court of 10 soldiers to serve life sentences for the commission of various atrocity crimes. We hope that the Government of South Sudan will continue to demand accountability for all those guilty of heinous crimes, not just against humanitarian personnel but also against the people of South Sudan, who so fervently hope for peace and tranquillity.

I would like to end by paying well-deserved tribute to Mr. Haysom for the successful and noble work he carried out in South Sudan, where he leaves with his head held high and duties fulfilled upon the signing of the Peace Agreement. We wish him the same success in Somalia and hope that he can contribute to the return of peace and stability in that sister nation in the Horn of Africa.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of South Sudan.

Mr. Malwal (South Sudan): Allow me, first, to congratulate you, Mr. President, for assuming the presidency of the Security Council for the month of September. I would also like to welcome the Ambassador of Ethiopia as he begins his tenure in New York.

I would also like to acknowledge the presence of Under-Secretary-General Lacroix, Special Envoy Haysom, Special Envoy Ambassador Wais and Ms. John, the latter two being in the region. We would like to thank Ambassador Wais for his patience and perseverance. He played a major role in what we are celebrating in South Sudan today. We appreciate Mr. Haysom's dedication in the service to the people of South Sudan. The revitalized Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict in the Republic of South Sudan was achieved, in large part, due to his wisdom and advice to the parties. We wish him luck in his new assignment. We are, however, pleased that he will remain in the region, and surely we will continue to see him.

On behalf of the Government of South Sudan, we would like to offer our condolences to the peace and humanitarian workers who lost their lives in the line of duty. Our prayers also go to the soldier who was injured in the attack in Yei last week. We wish him a speedy recovery.

On 12 September, South Sudanese political leaders signed the revitalized Agreement in Addis Ababa. That long-awaited Agreement was a result of the leaders of the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD), led by Mr. Abiy Ahmed, Prime Minister of Ethiopia; President Omar Al-Bashir, President of the Sudan; and President Yoweri Museveni, President of Uganda, who, after many futile attempts, were wise to think outside the box. For that, we are thankful and grateful to them and the region.

As the Security Council meets today to discuss issues regarding the United Nations Mission in South Sudan, there are winds of peace blowing in the region, and we are happy that South Sudan is breathing those winds of peace and hope. The people of South Sudan are excited that the Government and the opposition leaders signed the revitalized Agreement. Moreover, President Salva Kiir Mayardit's statement on 15 September, in which he pledged that the Government would implement the Agreement in good faith and appealed for forgiveness and reconciliation among the people of South Sudan, was a call for the people of South Sudan to unite after years of senseless war and division.

We know that the Agreement is difficult and complicated, and the international community has voiced some concerns about it. However, it is important that those concerns should not be allowed to undermine the Agreement itself, or its implementation. Instead,

we would like to appeal to the international community to look at the signing of the Agreement as a positive turn of events. It should send signs of encouragement and support to the political leadership as it embarks on the difficult task of implementing the Peace Agreement and reuniting the communities in South Sudan. It is an achievement on which the international community should build. In the words of Mr. Haysom, we must not allow the perfect to be the enemy of the good.

At this juncture, and in conclusion, we would like to thank the Secretary-General for his report (S/2018/831) and welcome his commitment to remain engaged during the coming years of implementation. We urge the Council to join the Secretary-General, the African Union and IGAD in the endeavour of making sustainable peace a reality at long last in South Sudan.

The meeting rose at 5.10 p.m.